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- ART. I. — 1. *Introduction to the History of Philosophy.* By VICTOR COUSIN, Professor of Philosophy of the Faculty of Literature at Paris. *Translated from the French.* By HENNING GOTTFRIED LINBERG. Boston : Hilliard, Gray, Little, & Wilkins. 1832. 8vo. pp. 458.
2. *Specimens of Foreign Standard Literature. Vols. I. and II. Containing Philosophical Miscellanies, translated from the French of COUSIN, JOUFFROY, and B. CONSTANT. With Introductory and Critical Notices.* By GEORGE RIPLEY. Boston : Hilliard, Gray, & Co. 1838. 12mo. pp. 383 and 376.
3. *Elements of Psychology ; included in a Critical Examination of Locke's Essay on [the] Human Understanding, with Additional Pieces.* By VICTOR COUSIN, Peer of France, &c. &c. &c. *Translated from the French, with an Introduction and Notes.* By the Rev. C. S. HENRY, D. D. Second Edition, prepared for the Use of Colleges. New York : Gould & Newman. 1838. 12mo. pp. 423.

THE writings of Cousin form the popular philosophy of the day. Their success in this country is attested by the appearance of the three translations, of which the titles are given above, one of which has already passed to a second edition, and has been introduced as a text-book in some of our principal colleges. There must be some grounds for this popularity, apart from the bias manifested by many people to

adopt as their favorite system of philosophy, the one which happens to be the last published. Such a bias operated to swell the favor with which the writings of the late Dr. Brown were at first received, and in its reaction to depress his reputation with quite as much injustice as it had at first been elevated. We do not anticipate for Cousin such a rapid fall in public estimation, because his great learning and the merits of his style, to carry the comparison no further, give him a decided advantage over the Scotch professor ; and his lectures, moreover, are not a posthumous publication. His manner, after all, is not much to the taste of sober and accurate thinkers ; but it has qualities which are sure to please the majority of readers. Evidently formed in the lecture room, it is sometimes eloquent, but more frequently declamatory. Profound subjects are treated without any affectation of profundity of manner,—the capital vice of the German metaphysicians ; and the general lucidness of the views set forth is due partly to the clearness of the writer's mind, and partly to the superficial character of his inquiries. He never fatigues the reader with a long train of argument, either because he dislikes the subtleties of logic, or is incapable of that severe exertion of mind which is necessary in order to bridge over the vast interval, that often separates ultimate truths from primitive perceptions. His conclusions lie but a step from the premises, when they have any premises at all, and they are repeated with a frequency, that marks the habits of a lecturer to a mixed audience, while it spares any severe effort of memory to those, who have the good fortune of being able to study the matter in print. We find nothing like terseness of manner, or simplicity of statement ; and the rhetoric, though highly wrought, in our judgment at least, often appears cold and artificial, instead of being penetrated with real warmth of feeling. But there is great copiousness, and not unfrequently much dignity, of expression ; and the swell of diction often gives prominence and effect to the enunciation of simple and familiar truths. The fairness and candor, which, with one great exception, he displays in estimating the services of other metaphysicians, are quite as manifest as the complacency, with which he alludes to his own merits.

Apart from the excellences and defects of manner, the favor shown to the writings of Cousin is due to the skill with

which he has borrowed from the works of other philosophers, to the lucid manner in which he has treated the materials thus obtained, and to the ingenuity with which he has interwoven them into his own system. He has known how to put all schools under contribution, and thus to build up, piece by piece, the mosaic work of the edifice, which he calls his own. The Scotch and Germans are those to whom he is most indebted, though the obligation is certainly mutual, for the doctrines thus transplanted are often freed from objectionable peculiarities, expressed with greater force and clearness, and thus brought within the reach of a wider circle of readers. The reputation of being a skilful borrower may not appear very flattering, but there are great merits in the able execution even of this secondary task. To break up the distinctions between various schools, to give universal currency to the treasures of intellect and taste, which had otherwise been confined to a single nation, to make available for common use the labors even of one master mind, which has been more successful in the discovery than the dissemination of truth, is an office which has sure claims on the gratitude, though it may not challenge the admiration, of mankind. We give all credit to Cousin for the ability with which he has used his stores of learning, and for the frankness which he shows in confessing the extent of his obligations.

But he is mistaken in imagining, that this manner of building up a system by patchwork is really a new method of conducting philosophical inquiry. He speaks of Eclecticism, as if it were a *Novum Organon* for the advancement of metaphysical science, and as if the neglect of it had been the leading cause of the errors and contradictions, with which the history of philosophy is filled. Here is the double error of supposing, in the first place, that Eclecticism as such can properly be called any method at all for the discovery of truth; and, in the second place, of believing, that it is the peculiar characteristic of his own philosophy. As to the former point, one might as well talk about an Eclectic system of geometry. The word does not refer to any new method of finding truth, but only to the manner of presenting the result of one's labors to the world, whether alone or in connexion with the fruits of other men's researches. And in the second place, every system of philosophy, which has been broached since the time of Thales, has been more or

less Eclectic in its character. Indeed, if philosophy be any science at all, it must grow by addition, by the successive contributions of different minds. Every new fact discovered, every additional principle evolved, forms a new item to swell the previous store. It is true, that the longing after unity and completeness operates as a constant temptation to round off the whole into a single theory. But in no case, that ever we heard of, has such theory been presented as the entire growth of one mind. To go no further for instances, every one perceives, that Kant is under great obligations to Aristotle, Reid to Locke, and Cousin to all the four, to say nothing of many others. If philosophy be considered, as some would have it, as the solution of a single problem, it is evident that no Eclecticism is possible, for there can be only one true solution. If, on the contrary, it be considered as a science, as it really is the most comprehensive of all sciences, then Eclecticism, to a greater or less degree, is unavoidable. One cannot, if he would, avoid incorporating into his own view of it some portion of the labors of other men, whether these elements of truth remain in the state in which they were first announced by their discoverers, or have since passed out into practice, as familiar principles of thought or conduct.

When Kant applied the term *Criticism* to his preliminary examination of the grounds on which metaphysical science rests, he used the word with a definite meaning attached to it, and had good reasons for its application. His great work comprised a critical inquiry into the origin and nature of all *a priori* knowledge, with a view to test the stability of the foundation, on which rest all systems of philosophy, whether dogmatical or skeptical, and thereby to determine the merits of those systems. But we see no propriety in designating the system of Cousin as an Eclectic philosophy, except in the mere fact, that he has borrowed more largely than others have done from the labors of his predecessors, and therefore can with less reason be said to possess any system that is his own. So far as it is borrowed, it does not belong to him ; so far as it is original, it is not Eclectic.

There is a similar error in his remarks upon Method, where he lays much stress on the process of inquiry by way of observation and induction, as if it were the distinguishing trait of his own labors in the field of mental philosophy.

Every system purports to rest more or less directly upon observed facts, since the wildest theorist would disclaim the intention of building hypotheses, without pretending to seek a basis for them in universal experience. None have been more cautious in this respect, than the Sensualists of the school of Condillac. Cousin objects to them, and with reason, that they have confined themselves to the most obvious facts in our mental constitution, without inquiring into their grounds and origin, and thus have held up the mere phenomena of sensation as presenting a complete theory of our intellectual nature. A more searching analysis discloses an element in the information supposed to come through the senses, which cannot be attributed to the outward impression, and the origin of which must therefore be inferred, not observed, from its characteristic features of universality and necessity. Following closely in the steps of the Scotch metaphysicians, Cousin has laid bare this element, and traced it to its home among the original and intuitive perceptions of the soul. We do not question either the result, or the legitimacy of the method by which it is obtained ; but what we have to remark is, that Cousin here abandons the rules of investigation, on which he insisted so much in the outset, and proceeds by inference and analogy. From the nature of the case, the primitive character of a cognition cannot be observed ; it must be deduced from the secondary and complex notions, which alone are the direct objects of consciousness. It is even a hypothesis ; a legitimate one, it is true, but still a hypothesis, for it is assumed to be primitive, only because no fact of experience has yet been shown sufficient to account for its existence.

Certainly, we do not find fault with the method here pursued by Cousin, for we believe, that in great part it is the only possible method. We blame him only for laying down in the outset such an insufficient rule of inquiry, that he is obliged to desert it before he has fairly entered the vestibule of the science. The instance we have given, the analysis of the mental act in perception, lies at the very threshold of a psychological theory, and in order to take this first step it is necessary to use a higher Organon of investigation, than that which Bacon established as the only legitimate one for physical science. What are we to expect then, when our author impis his wings for a loftier flight, and soars into the

higher regions of speculative philosophy by a series of the boldest and widest generalizations? Why, that he should wholly lose sight, as he does, of his preliminary principles, and proceed by anticipations as bold as ever entered the teeming brains of those who formed the ancient Grecian schools. His doctrine of the absolute, of the impersonality of the reason, his anticipation of the epochs into which the history of philosophy *must* divide itself, his *a priori* method of writing general history, — these are strange fruits of a rigid application of the inductive method.

Cousin has written and published much, but has never given to the public an entire and connected view of his system in a single work. His theory must be pieced together from prefaces, lectures, and scraps of criticism. This circumstance detracts from the systematic appearance of his speculations, and makes it less a matter of surprise, that there should be a frequent want of harmony between the parts. As in the later publications we find many opinions modified and set in a different light from that in which they were first expressed, it is probable that the system is not yet definitely worked out in the author's own mind, and therefore an attempt to represent its features as a whole would be, even now, premature. Perhaps, after all, a consciousness of weakness may be at the bottom of this delay, — a lurking fear, lest the prominent points of difference between him and his predecessors, when reduced to their simplest expression in a methodical theory, should not appear to so much advantage as they now do, when brought in singly and incidentally, and placed in sharp contrast with opinions of an opposite character. Be this as it may, there is an obvious propriety, at present, in abstaining from any attempt to give a miniature sketch of his philosophical doctrine as a whole, and in confining our remarks and criticisms to those points, on which Cousin himself lays most stress, as furnishing the keynote of all his speculations. His writings are now so widely known, that our readers can find no difficulty in following rather a desultory comment upon them.

A liking for bold and splendid generalizations, rapidly formed and confidently stated, which Cousin possesses in common with most speculative writers of his nation, is very apparent in his analysis and arrangement of the elements of pure reason. Aristotle, the most successful of all philoso-

phers in forming a comprehensive and systematic classification of the operations of intellect, attempted to give a general statement of our modes of thought, and thus produced his system of the *categories*. These forms were considered by him as objective, for the basis of the thought, in each case, was held to be a property inherent in the outward thing. Nature was considered in its effects upon mind, and thus a classification of mental phenomena represented also those qualities of external objects, to which the phenomena were believed to correspond. The list thus formed was altered and enlarged by Kant, who also boldly inverted the method of Aristotle by maintaining the doctrine, that the mind creates the object, and beholds in the properties of nature nothing but a reflection of itself. The thinking subject projects its own modes of action and being upon the unsentient object, and gives out from itself the coloring and forms, if not the very tissue and framework, of the natural world. The Greek nomenclature was in great part retained, and the categories, twelve in number, were divided equally among the four classes of quantity, quality, relation, and modality. The essential vice of both theories is, that the classification is merely formal, the phenomena of intelligence being numberless, and the reduction of them to a few elements proceeding on principles that are wholly arbitrary. Every aspect under which an object may be viewed, every relation it may bear to other objects, presents a distinct conception, and the further we carry our arbitrary suppression of the points of difference between these conceptions, the smaller will be our list of ultimate elements, and the more imperfectly will a particular idea be represented in that general notion, which stands at the head of its class. Kant had twelve categories ; Cousin reduces them all to three. Cousin's reduction is a forced and capricious one, but no more so, perhaps, than the preceding arrangement of Kant, or the original synthesis of Aristotle. Classification proceeds by considering only the common properties of things, to the exclusion of all individual and distinguishing traits. The process is legitimate only when the objects of it are complex. A partial consideration of *simple* ideas is impossible, and any attempt, therefore, to rank them together must destroy their essential character. An imperfect apprehension of them is necessarily a false apprehension, and classification will produce nothing but confusion.



In Cousin's bold reduction of the elements of reason, the ideas of unity, substance, cause, identity, eternity, &c. are all identified as various forms of the Infinite ; while the correlative ideas of multiplicity, phenomenon, effect, diversity, and time are regarded as modifications of the Finite. These ideas of the Infinite and the Finite, and the relation between them, constitute the three ultimate elements of reason, beyond which the force of analysis can no further go. It is difficult to imagine on what principle this bold effort of generalization proceeds. Our idea of unity is not one and the same with that of cause, nor is substance identical with eternity ; nor is the idea of infinity, whether considered as the mere negation of limit, or as a positive and independent conception, necessarily predicated of either. The consideration of an object as one or many is very different from the view of it as active or passive, or as finite or infinite. When Cousin, therefore, ranks together all terms of the first class as infinite, and all those of the second as finite, it cannot be because the relation of sameness exists between them, in spite of apparent diversity. The diversity is real, is essential, and moreover is so apparent and striking, that it cannot be blinked out of view, or hidden by a mist of words. *Il saute aux yeux*. The principles which led to this bold grouping together of dissimilar ideas, and the arguments by which it is supported, are nowhere stated in Cousin's published writings, though he affirms, that they are developed at length in some academical prelections, which as yet have not seen the light. Here is one instance of the evil effects of publishing a system piecemeal, that the reader is perplexed by broad and confident statements, which he has no means of investigating, but must accept or reject on the unsupported authority of the writer.

The most profound problem of speculative philosophy, the one which necessarily occupies the front rank in all metaphysical systems, relates to the certainty of human knowledge. How do we know, that things are what they appear ? How do we effect a passage from the percipient mind to the existence of things in themselves ? The skeptic affirms, that the mind is directly conscious only of its own operations, and that the assumption of an order of being, which exists independently of the thoughts in which it is portrayed, is entirely gratuitous and improper. He even goes further, and, on the

ground of the fleeting and successive character of all mental representations, denies the existence of the thinking subject, and thus leaves nothing remaining of creation but a crowd of ideas, that succeed each other without order, self-direction, or purpose. It is true, that human nature corrects this extravagant Pyrrhonism, and compels the skeptic in his daily conduct to give the lie to his forced opinions. But the philosopher is not content with this summary treatment of the difficulty, and with restless curiosity seeks for the reasons, on which this decisive verdict of nature is based. The various modes of solving this problem amount to little more than attempts to substantiate knowledge which is admitted to be intuitive, or in other words, to find arguments wherewith to establish those principles, which, *ex hypothesi*, cannot rest upon argument. No wonder, therefore, that the results of the speculation in every case should be vague and profitless.

The solution of the difficulty here referred to forms the most original and characteristic doctrine in the system of Cousin. He seeks to give higher authority to the principle of intuitive belief, by maintaining that the faculty of Pure Reason is *impersonal*, and that its dictates ought therefore to be received as the fruits of actual inspiration. According to this theory, personality belongs only to the will, and since belief is independent of volition, truth is universal and imperative, and the individual mind is only the organ, through which it is manifested to consciousness. "Truth itself is absolute, and what we call *Reason* is truly distinct from ourselves." If this faculty were individual and personal, it is argued, it would also be voluntary and free, and we should be able to control its acts in the same way that we determine our particular volitions. But the axioms of mathematics and the first principles of morals are necessary apprehensions, and the being who receives them knows, that all other persons must submit to the same convictions. All truths of this class, therefore, cannot be individual, cannot be human. The faith which we have in them is not grounded on our own strength, but rests on authority that cannot be evaded or denied.

But here the objection immediately presents itself, that human reason is not infallible, but is subject to constant aberrations, the reality of which is proved by the very errors, for the refutation of which this theory is propounded. Cousin replies, that as truth in itself is independent of personal con-

viction, so the Reason in itself is independent of man in whom it appears. In him it is obscured and perverted by the personal attributes, in connexion with which it exists; it is thwarted by the passions, and clouded by the imagination. To obtain its uncorrupted dictates, we must distinguish between its original and secondary condition, between its spontaneous developement and its exercise as watched and limited by reflection. The latter faculty cannot perform its functions until objects are furnished to it by the primitive action of mind. These objects are the great truths, lying at the basis of all intellectual operations, which are at first perceived in a confused, though vivid manner, and which compel belief, almost before they are subject to attention; certainly, before they are examined. The child does not doubt, he believes; and the objects of his belief, commanding instant and unhesitating submission, are the fruits of real inspiration. These "immediate illuminations of the reason," as Cousin styles them, are soon confused and colored with ideas borrowed from the senses and the affections, and then comes the hard task of reflection to decompose the compound thus formed, and to gather up again the primitive and pure elements of inspired truth. Thus is vindicated the authority which reason exerts in breaking through the meshes of skepticism, and in establishing the unhesitating faith of childhood on a firmer basis, than that which supports the surest deductions of science.

We have followed Cousin's own phraseology here as nearly as possible without finding room for copious extracts. It will be seen, when closely examined, that the language is wavering and inconsistent to the last degree, like that of a person who has not yet made up his own mind upon the theory, which he designs to promulgate. At one time, it is only the product of pure reason, the intuitive belief itself, which is not obtained by our own effort, but dawns upon us from a higher source. Then again, and more frequently, it is the faculty itself which is not our own, but assumes the character of an independent and decisive witness. In this latter sense, the doctrine, when stripped of the mist of words that encompass it, is wholly devoid of meaning. Define *Reason* as we may, separate its operations by whatever line from those of the understanding, it is still a mental faculty, or a peculiar manner of apprehending truth. Now, the thinking principle

is one, and its modes of action, though separately considered for convenience and classification, and marked out with distinct appellations as various faculties, are only different phases of one subject viewed at successive times and acting under dissimilar circumstances. That I have one faculty of memory, and another of judgment, is a phrase which means nothing more, than that I am able both to remember and to judge. Hence, the assertion that a mental faculty is impersonal and does not belong to us, is a contradiction in terms ; in the same breath it both affirms and denies, that the mind has the power of acting in a particular way. Either the mind is capable of apprehending primitive truths, or it is not ; in the former case, we are said to have the *power* or *faculty* of apprehending them ; in the latter, these truths for us have no existence. To raise a question, therefore, about the ownership of a faculty, whether it is ours or somebody's else, is to deal in nonsense.

Cousin argues, that Reason is not personal, because its action is not voluntary, or subject to our control. Carry out this argument, and it will follow, that the greater part of the phenomena of mind is not personal, — does not belong to the thinking subject. All emotion is involuntary ; all sensation the same. But are not our individual pleasures and pains our own possessions, — personal in the strictest sense of the word ? Is not the power of receiving these pleasures our own faculty, affected by our states of being and modes of action, sharpened by exercise and blunted by neglect ? In truth, Cousin boldly identifies personality with activity, and then, as intellect is necessarily distinguished from will, he draws the necessary inference, that the whole cognitive faculty is impersonal. “Who ever said,” he asks, “*my* truth, or *your* truth ?” He forgets that error, no less than truth, is frequently the product of mental action, and certainly nothing is more individual, more personal, than mistaken perceptions and false deductions. The unseen power which, on his principles, kindly performs for us those actions once deemed to be our own, as frequently leads us wrong as right ; the light which leads astray is equally a light from heaven. That we may not be accused of misrepresenting the opinions of Cousin in this particular, we quote a passage in which he denies the personality of sensation, as well as of reason.

“Sensible facts are necessary. We do not impute them to ourselves. Rational facts are also necessary ; and reason is no less independent of the will than sensibility. Voluntary facts alone are marked in the view of consciousness with the characteristics of personality and responsibility. The will alone is the person or the *me*. The *me* is the centre of the intellectual sphere. So long as the *me* does not exist, the conditions of the existence of all the other phenomena might be in force, but, without relation to the *me*, they would not be reflected in the consciousness, and would be for it as though they were not. On the other hand, the will creates none of the rational and sensible phenomena ; it even supposes them, since it does not apprehend itself, except in distinction from them. We do not find ourselves, except in a foreign world, between two orders of phenomena which do not pertain to us, which we do not even perceive, except on condition of separating ourselves from them.” — *Ripley's Philosophical Miscellanies*, Vol. I. p. 124.

Here is a clear avowal then, that the whole action of mind, where uncontrolled by the will, takes place by a foreign power, and is therefore wrongly ascribed to the thinking person. The fallacies of reasoning, as well as the intuitive perception of truth, the successive acts of sensation, with the inferences, sometimes correct and sometimes erroneous, that are founded upon them, and the emotions with which they are accompanied, — are all the promptings of an agent, whose existence is independent of our own. The distinction between the spontaneous and the reflective reason is here of no avail, for it is not the secondary act which obscures and perverts the primitive perception, but the original sensations themselves which are the causes of errors, that are subsequently rectified by the judgment. What grounds of confidence have we, then, for the passage from psychology to ontology, to facilitate which the whole theory was contrived, when the independent and impersonal agent, who was to help us over the difficulty, is the convicted cause of all the blunders and fallacies, to which human intellect is liable ?

But it is a waste of time to go about controverting a theory, which contradicts itself at the first step. The familiar fact, to which Descartes appealed when seeking for proof of his own existence, is enough to place this contradiction in a clear light. Every act of consciousness is accompanied with the immediate and irresistible conviction, that the thinking subject

coexists with the thought, and is manifested in it. The consciousness that "I think," necessarily implies my own existence, and the mode of that existence. It affirms three things, my own being, the reality of the thought, and the connexion between these two existences by the relation of substance and phenomenon. The latter affirmation is quite as clear and positive as the two preceding. The thought is perceived to be personal, to be mine, to be at the moment the phasis of my own being. Cousin contradicts this assertion, and thus attempts to establish the infallibility of a faculty by denying one of its first dictates.

We observe further, that the doctrine, if established, would be profitless for Cousin's purpose. A belief, that is in its own nature absolute and imperative, acquires no additional force from the knowledge that it was imparted to us by an independent agent. It must stand or fall by its intrinsic strength, the question respecting its origin being one of pure curiosity. What is received upon authority may be deceptive, as well as what is acquired by our own researches. The arguments of the skeptic, which, on the common hypothesis, are directed against the trustworthiness of our cognitive faculties, upon this theory would be turned against the truthfulness of the source of inspiration, and we do not see why they would not be as valid in the one case as in the other. Let any one ask himself, if his conviction of the truth of any proposition in Euclid would be increased by the discovery, that the theorem was made known to him by special or general inspiration. Let him ask further, if any fruits of admitted inspiration could be entertained for a moment, if they were found to contradict the first principles of natural and personal belief. Then it must be admitted, that the *genesis* of principles has no effect on their validity, and that the doctrine we are considering is not only destitute of foundation, but nugatory in its results.

Other peculiarities of Cousin's philosophical system will come into notice in examining his celebrated review of Locke, a work on which his reputation for acuteness, accuracy, and sound reasoning mainly depends. An English critic of high authority has pronounced it "the most important work on Locke since the *Nouveaux Essais* of Leibnitz." The lectures which Cousin delivered at Paris in 1829 were intended to give a general history of the philosophy of the eighteenth

century ; but nearly half the course was devoted to this critical examination of the " *Essay on Human Understanding*," which has attracted much attention in Europe, and the translation of which has already passed to a second edition in this country. The plan and execution of the criticism place it certainly far above the writer's other publications. There is less rhetoric and more logic in it than he usually employs ; the style is more compressed, and opinions are stated with greater precision. Great candor is manifested through the whole examination, and though the misrepresentations of Locke, as we shall have occasion to show, are frequent, they do not appear intentional.

It is no easy task to criticize fairly a writer who lived a century ago, and occupied himself with a science so shifting in its phraseology and fluctuating in its aspect, as the philosophy of intellect. The subject is contemplated by the original writer and the critic from very different points of view, the parts are differently distributed, the nomenclature is not the same, and changes in the mode of statement are mistaken for contrarieties of opinion. The sense in which a particular doctrine is affirmed or denied must be gathered from contemporary writers, and a careful examination of the ends which the subject of criticism had in view. From inattention to these requisites, Cousin's estimate of Locke's merits as a philosopher does not seem to us to possess even tolerable correctness. He has not carried his mind back to the period when the " *Essay* " was written, nor judged of its leading doctrines in reference to the opinions which called them forth, and which they were designed to refute. But he has brought the work down to the present day, and applying to it the standard which belongs to another school, has found nothing but variety and opposition, where there was frequently coincidence, and even identity, of doctrine. He has stretched Locke upon the Procrustes bed of modern German philosophy, and then proceeded to lop off a joint here and extend a member there, when a little care and management would have shown, that between the recumbent figure and the couch there was no such vast disproportion after all. Wherever differences of opinion, that cannot be reconciled, actually exist, we apprehend that Locke will be found in the right quite as often as his antagonist. But of such differences we say nothing for the present. Our point now is, to show that Cousin has often

misunderstood Locke, and censured him for holding opinions which were never present to his mind, and which he would not have avowed under any circumstances.

What was Locke's chief purpose in writing the greater part of his celebrated Essay? To confute the Cartesian doctrine of Innate Ideas. What is the leading object of Cousin's lectures? To controvert that French system of philosophy, which traces all knowledge to sensation. The former argues, that the hypothesis of innate ideas is unnecessary, if it can be shown, that the mind possesses means or faculties through which, *by experience*, (that is, by use of these faculties,) it can attain all the knowledge which it is found to possess. His point is proved, if it be made to appear, that all knowledge comes *after* experience; for then the doctrine, that ideas exist in the mind antecedent to any use of the faculties, falls to the ground. The end which Locke proposed to himself is fully enunciated in the dictum of Kant, "that all knowledge *begins* with experience." Cousin's object is to identify the doctrines of Locke with those of the French Sensualists, — to whip them over his back. The system which is really confuted in these lectures is that of Condillac, the pages of Locke being searched for those expressions and forms of statement which seem to convey opinions most favorable to the Sensual theory. Unluckily, the loose and inaccurate language and endless repetitions, which Locke employs, too frequently favor this proceeding. Amid the many dissimilar doctrines which may be extracted from the contradictory passages and careless statements of the "Essay on Human Understanding," fairness requires us to select those, as conveying the real opinions of the writer, which conform most nearly to the end which he had in view. We have shown, that this end is attained by giving that interpretation to Locke's language, which makes it convey a doctrine, that is expressly sanctioned by Kant and Cousin himself.

Locke ascribes the origin or beginning of our knowledge to the two faculties of Sensation and Reflection. Sometimes he appears to maintain, that all our ideas proceed *from* these sources; then again his language implies, that our knowledge comes *through* these faculties, or is first manifested on occasion of their exercise. Instances of the former mode of expressing the doctrine are cited in sufficient number by Cousin. As examples falling under the second class, take the following extracts, which may be multiplied at pleasure.



“There are some (ideas) *that make themselves way and are suggested to the mind* by all the ways of sensation and reflection.” — Book 2. Chap. iii. § 1.

“Existence and unity are two other ideas, *that are suggested to the understanding* by every object without and every idea within.” — Book 2. Chap. vii. § 7.

“*By observing what passes in our minds*, how our ideas there in train constantly some vanish, and others begin to appear, *we come by* the idea of succession.” — Book 2. Chap. xiv. § 31.

“Among all the ideas we have, *as there is none suggested to the mind by more ways*, so there is none more simple than that of unity, or one.” — Book 2. Chap. xvi. § 1.

“Being capable of no other simple ideas, belonging to any thing but body, but those which *by reflection* we receive *from* the operation of our mind, we can attribute to spirits no other but what we receive from thence.” — Book 2. Chap. xxiii. § 36.

The language in this last extract is strictly precise and accurate, for reflection is represented in its true function, as the vehicle, not the source, of the knowledge which it is said to communicate. In the other extracts the same doctrine is conveyed, though in phraseology not equally clear; the act of reflection or sensation suggests the idea, but does not impart it; in other words, the act marks the occasion on which the knowledge is developed. We believe this statement conveys Locke's real opinion, in spite of the unguarded language so frequently used throughout the Essay. He intended to mark the chronological, not the logical, succession of our ideas, intentionally passing over the latter branch of the inquiry, as the consideration of it was unnecessary for the accomplishment of his chief purpose, — the refutation of Descartes. His theory interpreted in this manner, when tried by the standard of our modern philosophy, appears correct as far as it goes. Indeed, his doctrine respecting the functions of sensation and reflection, representing them as the only avenues of intelligence, is not merely the only true, but the only possible, description of the beginning of knowledge. The two worlds of matter and mind are the only objects of human cognition. We can know the former only by the agency of that faculty which, — whether it be a simple or a compound activity, whether it afford results that are pure, or those only which are colored and modified by the constitution of the recipient, — is always denominated *sensation*. We learn the

phenomena of mind only through that power, — call it reflection, consciousness, or what you please, — through which the thinking subject takes cognizance of *self*.

In criticizing this account of the origin of the ideas, Cousin objects “that Locke evidently confounds reflection with consciousness. Reflection, in strict language, is undoubtedly a faculty analogous to consciousness, but distinct from it, and pertains more particularly to the philosopher, while consciousness pertains to every man as an intellectual being.” It would be quite as well to show that the two things are really distinct, before blaming Locke for confounding them. On this point, it seems plain to us, that Locke is right and his critic is wrong. The distinction usually stated between consciousness and reflection is, that the former is the immediate witness, while the latter is the reviewer, of the operations of mind ; mental phenomena as they rise are taken notice of by the one, while they must be recalled or presented anew before they are subject to the inspection of the other. Taken in this sense, we deny that there is any such thing as immediate and active consciousness distinct from the mental act. A cognition and the consciousness of that cognition are one and the same thing. A single perception is simple and indivisible ; it cannot be analyzed into a fact and the consciousness of that fact, for the event itself being an act of knowing, it does not exist, if it be not known to exist. In one act of perception there is but one object, — the thing perceived ; while the hypothesis of a distinct and independent consciousness requires two, — the thing perceived, and the object of the consciousness, which is the perception itself. There is this further absurdity in the doctrine in question, that it requires every cognitive act to be followed by an infinite series of repetitions of itself ; I am conscious, first of the original thought, and then of that act of consciousness, and so on for ever. The truth seems to be, that whenever we are occupied with any subject of investigation, except the operations of our own minds, the current of thought runs on unchecked, the attention being wholly fastened on the object of study, and the relation between the successive ideas and the thinking person, the *me*, never attracting our notice. In such a state, of which the condition of a person absorbed in mathematical studies may be taken as an example, there is, properly speaking, neither reflection nor consciousness.

But when we examine the phenomena of our own minds, the train of ideas, so to speak, is continually doubling back on itself. The feeling cannot exist, — the mental phenomenon cannot be manifested, — and be examined at the same instant. The metaphysician, like the anatomist, must operate on the dead subject. He does not study the present state of his own mind, for the very reason, that his mind is now engaged in study, and does not manifest the phenomenon in question; but he examines his recollection of what was its condition a moment before, when it put forth the feeling, or existed under the phasis, which is now the object of his researches. What is called consciousness is always a reflex act, never immediate. Locke is not only right in admitting but one faculty, but the appellation he gives to it is the better chosen of the two.

Cousin devotes nearly a whole lecture to a minute examination of Locke's theory respecting the idea of Space. The criticism is founded entirely on Kant's doctrine respecting the same idea, though the skeptical conclusion of the German philosopher, that space has no objective existence, is not admitted by his French copyist. Respecting the justice of the criticism we have nothing to say, except to remark on the unfairness of accusing Locke of confounding the two ideas of body and space, where the very opposite doctrine is maintained in the "Essay," and the essential difference between the two conceptions is established at great length. Cousin's proof of this charge is so curious, that we extract the passage.

"Locke says; 'the idea of *place* we have by the same means that we get the idea of space, (whereof this is but a particular and limited consideration,) namely, by our sight and touch\*\*\*\*\*.' Same chapter, same section; 'to say that the world is somewhere, means no more than that it does exist;\*\*\*\*\*.' It is clear, that is to say, that the *space* [?] of the universe is equivalent to neither more nor less than to the universe itself, and as the idea of the universe is, after all, nothing but the idea of body, it is to this idea, that the idea of space is reduced. Such is the necessary genesis of the idea of space in the system of Locke."— *Elements of Psychology*, pp. 79, 80.

We now give at length the two sentences, of which Cousin has quoted but a small part.

"That our idea of place is nothing else but such a relative

position of any thing, as I have before mentioned, I think is plain, and will be easily admitted, when we consider that we can have no idea of the place of the universe, though we can of all the parts of it ; because beyond that we have not the idea of any fixed, distinct, particular beings, in reference to which we can imagine it to have any relation of distance ; but *all beyond it is one uniform space or expansion, wherein the mind finds no variety, no marks.* For to say that the world is somewhere, means no more than that it does exist ; this, though a phrase borrowed from place, signifying only its existence, not location ; and when one can find out and frame in his mind, clearly and distinctly, the place of the universe, he will be able to tell us whether it moves or stands still in the undistinguishable inane of infinite space : though it be true that *the word place has sometimes a more confused sense, and stands for the space which any body takes up ; and so the universe is in a place.* — Locke, on *Human Understanding*, Book 2. Ch. xiii. § 10.

Locke's doctrine clearly is, that place is mere "relation of distance"; therefore he affirms, that we have no idea of the place of the universe, because the universe has no fixed points of reference beyond itself. Cousin adopts that other "more confused sense" of the word *place*, by which it stands for the space which any body takes up, though Locke expressly mentions this meaning of the term, and admits, that in this sense the universe is in a place. It is but right to add, that this is the only instance we have noticed in Cousin of gross unfairness in making quotations. The perversion of meaning which is here caused by garbling the passage is quite ludicrous. But it was necessary in order to afford a peg, on which to hang a long argument, all borrowed from Kant, respecting the opposition between the ideas of body and space.

The chapter on the origin of our idea of Duration is one of the most satisfactory portions of Locke's whole treatise. The doctrine is so fully stated and with such clearness of language, that we know not how to account for Cousin's entire misconception of its meaning. Locke affirms, that the idea of time is first acquired by reflecting upon the succession of our ideas, and this account receives the full assent of his critic. — In proof of his doctrine, Locke mentions the fact, that when the succession of ideas ceases, our perception of duration ceases along with it ; as, for example, in dreamless sleep or profound reverie, where the current of thought is

stopped, or is concentrated on a single idea. Will it be believed, that on the ground of this simple illustration he is charged with confounding the two distinct ideas of succession and duration, the measure and the thing measured, and consequently with maintaining the monstrous doctrine, that when the train of thought stops, time stops also? Cousin says, that the necessary consequence of Locke's theory is, that the timepiece, which marked the lapse of hours during the sleep was wrong; "and the sun, like the timepiece, should have stopped." We copy Cousin's own quotation.

"That we have our notion of succession and duration from this original, viz. from reflection on the train of ideas which we find to appear one after another in our own minds, seems plain to me in that we have no perception of duration, but by considering the train of ideas that take their turns in our understandings. When that succession of ideas ceases, our perception of duration ceases with it; which every one clearly experiments in himself, whilst he sleeps soundly, whether an hour or a day, a month or a year; of which duration of things, while he sleeps or thinks not, he has no perception at all, but it is quite lost to him; and the moment wherein he leaves off to think, till the moment he begins to think again, seems to him to have no distance. And so I doubt not it would be to a waking man, if it were possible for him to keep only one idea in his mind, without variation and the succession of others."—Locke, on *Human Understanding*, Book 2, Ch. xiv. § 4.

Can any language more clearly repudiate the very consequence which Cousin endeavours to draw? It is not duration itself, which ceases while we sleep, but "*our perception* of duration"; the timepiece goes right, but the "*perception* of the time is quite lost to *him*" who sleeps. The critic surely does not mean to deny the fact, that in sound slumber we are unconscious of the flight of hours. To remove all doubt, in another section of the same chapter, the 21st, Locke directly controverts the very doctrine here put into his mouth. "We must therefore carefully distinguish betwixt duration itself, and the measures we make use of to judge of its length"; and in a subsequent part of the same section, "the train of our own ideas" is mentioned, as being this measure. And yet Cousin argues at great length this point, as if in opposition to Locke, finding under this head no other heresy with which to accuse the English philosopher. It is a fine specimen of the method of setting up pins, that one may have the pleasure

of knocking them down again. Better instances still are to come.

The idea of the Infinite is the next point, on which our author tries his strength with the founder of the Empirical school, as it is called. We shall not enter into the general discussion on this point, though it forms the corner stone of the Eclectic system, for it has already been discussed and refuted with great ability by the present accomplished professor of philosophy at Edinburgh, whose article on the subject, though well known to Cousin, he has for sound reasons never attempted to answer. Our remarks will be confined to the incidental glimpse of this theory, which is afforded in the commentary upon Locke. The following paragraph contains the substance of the criticism on this head.

“ After having sported awhile with the idea of the infinite as obscure, Locke objects again that it is purely negative, that it has nothing positive in it. B. II. ch. XVII. § 13 ; ‘ We have no positive idea of infinity.’ § 16 ; ‘ We have no positive idea of an infinite duration.’ § 18 ; ‘ We have no positive idea of infinite space.’ Here we have the accusation, so often since repeated, against the conceptions of reason, that they are not positive. But first, observe that there can no more be an idea of succession without the idea of time, than of time without the previous idea of succession ; and no more idea of body without the idea of space, than of space without the previous idea of body ; that is to say, there can no more be the idea of the finite without the idea of infinite, than of the infinite without the previous idea of the finite. From whence it follows in strictness, that these ideas suppose each other, and if any one pleases to say, reciprocally limit each other ; and consequently, the idea of the infinite is no more the negative of that of the finite, than the idea of the finite is the negative of that of the infinite. They are both negatives on the same ground, or they are both positives ; for they are two simultaneous affirmations, and every affirmation gives a positive idea.” — *Elements of Psychology*, p. 109.

It would be difficult to find in any writer on philosophy a more remarkable instance of confused thought and incorrect reasoning. Because the idea of body involves that of space, and succession presupposes time, *therefore* the conception of the finite necessarily requires that of the infinite. If he had said, that because bread is fabricated of flour, therefore the moon consists of green cheese, the logic would be quite as

conclusive. Because in a given instance, two ideas mutually contain and limit each other, it does not follow that any other two, taken at random, bear the same correlation. The argument means nothing at all, unless the premise be construed into the affirmation, that the conception of body involves that of *infinite* space, and succession presupposes eternity ; and in this form, the argument takes for granted the very point in question. Moreover, the assertion when thus interpreted is wholly untrue. The idea of *pure* space is the only necessary concomitant of body, that of infinite space being a subsequent deduction of the reason. Still further, the relations between the ideas in the two cases are wholly dissimilar, the comparison being drawn between perfectly incongruous things. The proposition, that the finite presupposes the infinite, corresponds to the assertion, that eternity is implied in time, or unlimited expansion in bounded extension. The relation between body and space, succession and duration, belongs to a different category.

The assertion of Locke, that the infinite is to our minds only a negative idea, as it is defended by those who were never suspected of favoring the doctrines of Condillac, is not enough to identify him with the Sensualist school. Cousin seeks for some remark, which shall appear tantamount to a denial of the existence of any such idea, but can find nothing which answers his purpose better than the following ; “ Number affords us the clearest idea of infinity.” This observation is construed to mean, that the idea in every case may be resolved into that of number ; though it really affirms no such thing, for it is not said, that number gives us the only notion of the infinite, but that the clearest conception of it is derived from this source. In many passages of the same chapter Locke expatiates upon this idea as applicable to time, space, and the attributes of the Supreme Being. On the latter point he holds the following decisive language. “ I think it unavoidable for every considering rational creature, that will but examine his own or any other existence, to have the notion of an eternal wise Being, who had no beginning ; and such an idea of infinite duration I am sure I have.”

But, though the assertion should be held to convey all the meaning that Cousin attributes to it, we may well ask, What follows ? The reply is so curious, that it deserves to be given in the writer's own words.

“But what is number? It is, in the last analysis, such or such a number; for every number is a determinate number. It is then a finite number, whatever it may be. Raise the figure as high as you please, the number, as such, is only a particular number, an element of succession, and consequently a finite element. Number is the parent of succession, not of duration; number and succession measure time, but are not adequate to it, and do not constitute it.

“The reduction of the infinite to number is, then, the reduction of time infinite, to its measure indefinite, that is, to the finite; just as, in regard to space, the reduction of space to body is the reduction of the infinite to the finite. Now to reduce the infinite to the finite is to destroy it; it is to destroy the belief of the human race; but as before observed, it saves the system of Locke.” — *Elements of Psychology*, p. 111.

“Every number is a determinate number.” What mean then the “surds,” the “imaginary quantities,” and the “infinite series,” of the algebraist? As to the remainder of the argument against the infinity of number, we have only to remark, that it is equally applicable to our ideas of infinite space and time. Whatever force the reasoning may have, in Cousin’s theory it is suicidal. If we were disposed to profit by the unlucky admissions of our author, the sentence which immediately succeeds the passage quoted above would afford a rich field for comment. “In fact, the infinite can be found neither in sense, nor consciousness, but the finite can be found there wonderfully well.” We would fain be told, where the idea of the infinite is found upon this hypothesis. In the reason, doubtless; but how does reason manifest itself, except through consciousness? If we are not conscious of any ideas or truths given by this faculty, for all practical purposes, it would seem, they might as well be withheld altogether.

The criticism upon Locke’s account of Personal Identity is, in the main, just and clearly expressed. The chapter upon this subject is one of the most unsatisfactory passages in the whole Essay, the doctrine leading to the most absurd consequences, which were perceived, and yet intrepidly avowed and supported by the writer. We are at a loss how to account for the error, especially as the natural course of Locke’s speculations by no means leads to such a wild doctrine, and the great blunder in it, that of confounding the witness or evidence of identity with identity itself, is at variance with every other portion of the theory.



But as the remarks on our idea of Substance in general present no such unfortunate matter for criticism, Cousin, as usual, manufactures a theory on the subject, which he puts into the mouth of Locke, and then proceeds to refute it with great earnestness and ability. The account which Locke really gives is one that coincides perfectly with all later speculations on the subject ; namely, that our conception of any particular substance is a mere congeries of our ideas of various qualities or properties, together with a supposition of something else, in which these attributes inhere, and which we call Substance in general. On this plain and self-evident statement, he goes on to build up his argument against the materialists of his day, — an argument which, as it uproots from the foundation the degrading hypothesis against which it is directed, has been reproduced in one form or another by almost every metaphysician since his time, who has adopted the distinction between body and spirit. The version of it by Dugald Stewart we extract from the first volume of his work on the “ Philosophy of Mind.”

“ The notions we annex to the words *matter* and *mind*, as is well remarked by Dr. Reid, are merely relative. If I am asked what I mean by matter, I can only explain myself by saying, it is that which is extended, figured, colored, movable, hard or soft, rough or smooth, hot or cold ; that is, I can define it in no other way, than by enumerating its sensible qualities. It is not matter or body, which I perceive by my senses ; but only extension, figure, color, and certain other qualities, which the constitution of my nature leads me to refer to something which is extended, figured, and colored. The case is precisely similar with respect to mind. We are not immediately conscious of its existence, but we are conscious of sensation, thought, and volition ; operations which imply the existence of something which feels, thinks, and wills. Every man too is impressed with an irresistible conviction, that all these sensations, thoughts, and volitions belong to one and the same being ; to that being which he calls *himself* ; a being, which he is led by the constitution of his nature, to consider as something distinct from his body, and as not liable to be impaired by the loss or mutilation of any of his organs.”

With his usual candor and deference towards his old instructor, Stewart here avows, that he borrows from Dr. Reid ; but with how much justice he attributes the origin of the argument to this writer, our readers may judge by the following quotations from Locke.

“*As clear an idea of spirit as body.*—The same happens concerning the operations of the mind, viz. thinking, reasoning, fearing, &c. which we, concluding not to subsist of themselves, nor apprehending how they can belong to body, or be produced by it, we are apt to think these the actions of some other substance, which we call spirit; whereby yet it is evident, that having no other idea or notion of matter, but *something* wherein those many sensible qualities which affect our senses, do subsist; by supposing a substance, wherein *thinking, knowing, doubting*, and a power of moving, &c. do subsist, *we have as clear a notion of the substance of spirit, as we have of body*; the one being supposed to be (without knowing what it is) the *substratum* to those simple ideas we have from without; and the other supposed (with a like ignorance of what it is) to be the *substratum* to those operations we experiment in ourselves within. It is plain, then, that the idea of corporeal *substance* in matter, is as remote from our conceptions and apprehensions, as that of spiritual *substance* or *spirit*: and therefore, from our not having any notion of the *substance* of spirit, we can no more conclude its non-existence, than we can, for the same reason, deny the existence of body; it being as rational to affirm there is no body, because we have no clear and distinct idea of the *substance* of matter, as to say there is no spirit, because we have no clear and distinct idea of the substance of a spirit.”

“Every act of sensation, when duly considered, gives us an equal view of both parts of nature, the corporeal and spiritual. For whilst I know, by seeing or hearing, &c. that there is some corporeal being without me, the object of that sensation; I do more certainly know, that there is some spiritual being within me that sees and hears. This, I must be convinced, cannot be the action of bare insensible matter; nor ever could be, without an immaterial thinking being.”—Locke, *on Human Understanding*, Book 2. Ch. xxiii. §§ 5, 15.

The impossibility of defining substance in general, otherwise than as *something* in which certain attributes inhere, is what induced Locke to repeat so frequently the assertion, that we have no *clear and distinct* idea of this common substratum. But that he did not intend thereby to question or deny the reality of substance, or of our idea of it, such as it is, appears from his indignant disavowal of the charge in the letters to Bishop Stillingfleet. We must confine our extract to a single sentence, but it is a decisive one.

“As long as there is any simple idea or sensible quality left, according to my way of arguing, substance cannot be discarded—  
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ed ; because all simple ideas, all sensible qualities, carry with them a supposition of a substratum to exist in, and of a substance wherein they inhere ; and of this that whole chapter is so full, that I challenge any one who reads it to think that I have almost, or one jot, discarded substance out of the reasonable part of the world."

It appears almost incredible, that Cousin, with these passages before him, should accuse Locke of "everywhere repelling the idea of substance," of "converting substance into a collection and making all things to be words," of "a systematic identification (*nec meus hic sermo est*) of substance and qualities, of being and phenomena." But let him be judged by his own words and quotations.

"Locke, however, everywhere repels the idea of substance, and when he officially explains it, he resolves it into a collection of simple ideas of sensation, or of reflection. B. II. ch. XXIII. §§ 3, 4, 6 ; '\*\*\*\*\* no other idea of substances than what is framed by a collection of simple ideas.' \*\*\*\*\* 'It is by such combinations of simple ideas, and nothing else, that we represent particular sorts of substances to ourselves.' " — *Elements of Psychology*, p. 119.

The mistake here is so gross, that we can only account for it on the supposition of the writer's imperfect acquaintance with the English language. Cousin speaks of "substance," in the singular, that is, in general ; Locke, of "substances," in the plural, that is, of particular bodies. Of course, the latter's real opinion is the very one, which his critic seeks to establish against him. One other quotation is made, but as it only contains the denial that we have any "clear and distinct" idea of substance, the point at issue is not affected by it. Cousin's arguments are wholly misapplied, and his rhetoric is thrown away.

We have thus far followed Cousin's criticism step by step, that our readers might judge of the correctness with which Locke's theory is expounded by him, not from a few instances culled here and there, but by following the critic's own track from the very commencement, taking all the subjects which he selected for attack, and considering them in his own order. Out of the first five points examined, Locke is grossly misrepresented upon four, in which a doctrine is charged upon him that he repudiates with quite as much earnestness as his critic. We do not accuse Cousin of intentional mis-

representation, but he seems to have commenced his work with a preconceived opinion, that in all essential respects the system developed in the "Essay on Human Understanding" must coincide with the theory of Condillac. He can see nothing which makes against this hypothesis, but fights most manfully against the Sensual system of his own countryman, thinking all the time that he is contending against Locke. So far as the English philosopher is concerned, his blows are all spent upon the air.

As our limits do not permit us to continue this minute examination of the lectures, we pass on now to those passages where the writer's own views are developed at greater length, and where the opposition between him and Locke becomes real and manifest. Cousin finds fault with the order which is given for the acquisition of our ideas ; he denies that we begin with simple ideas and then proceed to those which are complex, because, as he argues, many of our faculties come into exercise at once, and the compound idea that is formed by their simultaneous action must be analyzed by a subsequent effort of the understanding, before we arrive at simple notions. If this theory be given to account for the action of mind in its mature state, it is partially correct ; but if intended to describe the first steps of knowledge, to give a history of the infant mind, and such was clearly the intention of Locke, it is wholly erroneous. Of course, many avenues to knowledge are opened at once, and several agencies are exerted at the same moment. But the question is, whether the different elements, coming through separate channels, are at once referred to the same object, and therefore are immediately united and bound together in one complex idea. All observation proves the contrary. The infant perceives the color of an object long before he ascertains its shape by touch, still longer before he connects the idea of figure with that of variety in light and shade, so that he can infer the tangible from the visible qualities. The child can count ten before he can a hundred. Even to the adult, it is probable that many ideas arrive in succession, which from the quickness of the mental operations appear to come together. The synthesis really precedes the analysis, though by the force of habit, the former operation is so quickly and easily performed, that it requires an effort to stay the process and watch the steps ; just as the eye of a practised accountant runs over a column of figures and determines their sum, though a moment

afterwards he cannot recollect an item in the list, or recall one step in the addition. A compound habitually formed may be as difficult to analyze, as one presented to us in the first instance. Cousin has mistaken one source of the difficulty for another, and thus shows himself at fault in the first requisite of his method, — accurate observation.

On the theory of general ideas, Locke, like most other English metaphysicians, is an avowed and consistent Nominalist. He maintains, that general terms belong not to the real existence of things, but are the mere creatures of the understanding, formed for its convenience, and relate only to signs, whether these signs be words or ideas. This doctrine is so plain and self-evident, that it seems to require nothing else for its confirmation, but an appeal to consciousness. All the objects that we know as real existences are particular, and any proposition framed with respect to them must be limited in its application to the very things, that are specified in it. The truth of such a proposition may be tested by actual experiment, or through the imagination by the picture that the mind forms of the object, which is sufficiently accurate in many cases to enable us to decide without further trouble, whether or not the assertion conforms to the truth. But when abstract propositions are before the mind, the conceptive or *image-forming* faculty is at rest, and no reference of the sign to the thing signified is possible, except by assuming an individual as the type of a class. The possibility of reasoning in some cases with mere words, to which no ideas are attached further than as they are considered in certain relations to each other, is proved by the existence of such a science as algebra. That all abstract reasoning is of this character is a fact equally certain, for the connexion between the premises and conclusion of a syllogism depends entirely on the relation which the words used bear to each other, and is independent of the meaning of those words; the examples taken in a treatise upon logic being usually nothing but letters of the alphabet.

Cousin admits all this, but with his usual parade of Eclecticism professes to find some truth in the opposite hypothesis. He censures Locke for his exclusive Nominalism, and undertakes to show in opposition to him, that there are some general ideas which imply the real existence of their object. Though he affirms, that “there is equal truth and equal error

in the two theories," when the matter comes to a point, he adduces but two examples in support of Realism, — the ideas of space and time. The selection was certainly unfortunate, if there were many to choose from, but we suspect that they were the only instances to be found, from which our author could raise the shadow of an argument in support of the Realist hypothesis. We copy his own statement of the proof.

"It is certain, that when you speak of space, you have the conviction that out of yourself there is something which is space ; as also when you speak of time, you have the conviction that there is out of yourself something which is time, although you know neither the nature of time nor of space. Different times and different spaces, are not the constituent elements of space and time ; time and space are not solely for you the collection of different times and different spaces. But you believe that time and space are in themselves, that it is not two or three spaces, two or three ages, which constitute space and time ; for, every thing derived from experience, whether in respect to space or to time, is finite, and the characteristic of space and of time for you is to be infinite, without beginning and without end ; time resolves itself into eternity, and space into immensity. In a word, an invincible belief in the reality of time and of space, is attached by you to the general idea of time and space. This is what the human mind believes ; this is what consciousness testifies. Here the phenomenon is precisely the reverse of that which I just before signalized ; and while the general idea of a book does not suppose in the mind the conviction of the existence of any thing which is book in itself, here on the contrary, to the general idea of time and of space, is united the invincible conviction of the reality of something which is space and time." — *Elements of Psychology*, pp. 187, 188.

We say nothing here of the writer's inconsistency in admitting so large a portion of Kant's system, and still denying, as he does in the passage before us, the fundamental doctrine of the Critical Philosophy, — the subjective character of space and time. We pass over the incongruity, because in relation to this doctrine we hold with Cousin against the conclusions of Kant. Certainly we believe in the reality of space apart from the mind in which it is conceived. But this admission tends not in the slightest degree to the support of the Realist hypothesis, unless it be shown that our conception of

space is properly ranked among universals, or general ideas. The quiet assumption of this important step in the argument is one example among many that might be offered, of Cousin's careless and superficial manner of observing and classifying the phenomena of mind. Unlimited space is no general idea. It is not the name of a class comprehending many individuals under it, but it is a whole, which does not admit even of division into parts, except by a license of language, as it were, for the convenience of separate and partial consideration. A particular space is not an element of the one, all-embracing space, in the same sense in which oxygen is called one of the atmospherical gases, but only as we speak of one portion of the atmosphere, — that contained in a room, for example, — in distinction from the remainder, which is without. We do not pass from limited to unlimited space, as we do from a particular to a general idea, that is, by abstraction and synthesis; but only by an enlargement of the primary idea, or, more properly speaking, by removing an arbitrary and fictitious limit. We commonly speak, indeed, of space in general and in particular, but this use of the epithets is plainly figurative, referring only to the entire or the partial consideration of one idea. As perfectly similar observations are applicable to our conception of *time*, it is unnecessary to retrace our ground in reference to this idea. The attempt of Cousin, therefore, on the basis of these two notions of space and time to build up an argument in favor of Realism, must be regarded as a signal failure, as founded only on a gross misconception of the nature of the two examples adduced.

It is unnecessary to consider the criticism upon the Ideal theory as adopted by Locke, for in this portion of his labors our author has merely borrowed the doctrine and conclusive reasoning of Reid and Stewart, with which English readers are already sufficiently familiar. The hypothesis of mediate knowledge, of a perception of things only through the intervention of representative ideas, was the great mistake of the philosophy of the eighteenth century, — the capital error into which Locke fell in common with nearly all his contemporaries and immediate predecessors. The refutation of this theory with all its hurtful consequences is the great service for which we are indebted to the Scotch metaphysicians of our own day, who performed the task so thoroughly as to leave nothing for their successors to accomplish. We do not

blame Cousin for adopting their labors, for they had exhausted the subject, and no course was left, but to use their materials, or to pass over the matter altogether. But it was ungenerous and unfair in him to charge a gross exaggeration of the exploded doctrine upon the system of Locke. It is not true, that the ideal theory, as maintained by Locke, either expressly adopts materialism, or even leads to it by necessary inference. The representative idea may be an image of its object, but it is not a material image, the unsupported assertion of Cousin to the contrary notwithstanding. A direct statement of this sort, without argument or authority to support it, can be met only by a blunt denial and a call for the proofs.

If there be any one problem in philosophy, which more than all others has been rendered confused and intricate, not from any intrinsic difficulty, but from the imperfections of language, and the difficulty of translating known mental phenomena into words, it is surely the question respecting the Freedom of the Will. In practice, no one ever doubted, or can doubt, that such freedom exists. Actual and firm-seated Pyrrhonism on this subject is impossible, for the voice of conscience, the mental experience of every moment, and the intuitive and necessary assent of the understanding, compel us to believe, and we constantly act out that belief. But as soon as we attempt to express the grounds of the conviction, difficulties are introduced by the phraseology we are obliged to use, and every step in the argument only bewilders us still more, till at last we almost persuade ourselves to doubt. In his speculations on this subject, Locke's great merit consists in having clearly perceived this source of error. By a minute examination of the phraseology commonly employed, he proved that the words had only a forced and metaphorical application, while their literal and common signification is perpetually recurring to the mind, and leading it astray from the real point at issue. Thus, the designation of many separate faculties in the mind, as it leads to the supposition of so many distinct agents, has given rise to the question whether the *will* be free, instead of the only natural and intelligible inquiry, whether the *man* be free. Will is only a power, and as necessity implies the absence of power, it cannot be predicated of the will without a contradiction. The necessitarian doctrine, properly understood, amounts to a denial, that man has any will at



all, and is therefore opposed by the direct evidence of consciousness.

This criticism upon language, it is true, throws no light upon the main point at issue, but it has a subsidiary and not unimportant result in disclosing one great cause of erroneous reasoning upon the subject. It is quite characteristic in Cousin wholly to misconceive the aim and purport of this speculation, and because Locke protests against the application of the *word* liberty to the *word* will, to understand thereby, that he denies freedom "to the will, and seeks for it either in the thinking faculty, or in the power of outward motion." Why, the whole gist of Locke's argument is to prove, that liberty cannot be predicated of the willing faculty, the thinking faculty, the moving faculty, or any other faculty, but only of the man, — the indivisible *Ego* of consciousness. The proof of human freedom is considered afterwards, and placed precisely where Fichte and many of the later German philosophers have placed it; namely, in the power, which the thinking subject possesses, when in presence of two or more diverse and nearly balanced motives, to suspend the determining power of each and all these motives, until the judgment has had time to consider their relative importance. As we have no room for extracts on this point, we can only refer our readers to the fifty-second and fifty-sixth sections of Locke's chapter upon "Power."

Cousin's own reasoning upon this head affords a striking instance of confusion, arising from the very cause which Locke has so clearly pointed out. Proposing to discuss the question about human agency, he introduces a long argument to show that freedom cannot be ascribed to the understanding or to the outward act; but only to the will. That it cannot be attributed to the two former, he proves; that it is rightly ascribed to the latter, he takes for granted. All this is very well, only it is nothing to the purpose. The real question, which he does not touch, relates to the connexion between the understanding and the will. It is admitted on all hands, that motives are considered and balanced by the intellect; but it is also admitted, that these motives influence, not to say determine, the will. The question, whether they act directly upon it, or only through the medium of the understanding, is one of no importance. Some influence they undoubtedly have, but of what sort? Is the influence causal,

necessary, imperative, or only persuasive? Can it be resisted or not? A moment's reflection upon our idea of "necessary connexion" may throw some light upon this subject.

In the external world, when one phenomenon immediately and invariably succeeds another, we connect the two by the relation of cause and effect. Though nothing is perceived but the fact of close succession, we necessarily attribute to the first an efficient agency in producing the second. The power which fire has to inflame gunpowder, for instance, is not perceived. We see only the two events, that the spark falls, and the explosion instantly follows, and we assume the necessary connexion between the two by virtue of an original and instinctive law of belief. A causal union never is perceived, and it is admitted to exist only on the ground of this primitive conviction of the understanding. If we do not give full credit to this intuitive principle, there is no such thing as a *necessary* event in the world either of matter or of mind. Now if the question be asked, whether human agency is free, we reply, that its freedom is attested by the same species of evidence, by another law of human belief equally cogent with the first. In other words, there is precisely the same authority for "binding Nature fast in fate," and for "leaving free the human will." It will not do to receive the same testimony in one case, which we have just rejected in another. Either I am free to choose between two courses of conduct, or the word *necessity* has no meaning in it, and must be rejected altogether.

One lecture of Cousin, according to the abstract which is placed at its head in the manner of a table of contents, contains an "examination of three important theories found in the 'Essay on Human Understanding'; I. theory of freedom, which inclines to Fatalism; II. theory of the nature of the soul, which inclines to Materialism; III. theory of the existence of God, which rests itself almost exclusively upon external proofs, drawn from the sensible world." We have already considered the first of these subjects, and now pass on to the second. The charge of materialism would be preferred with a better grace against the principles of the "Essay," if the argument in favor of the immateriality of the thinking principle, with which the accusation is introduced, were not entirely borrowed from Locke himself. *Borrowed* we say, for though it is not credible, that Cousin took the

reasoning directly from the "Essay," where the sight of it must immediately have convinced him of the absurdity of his allegation, yet he must have obtained it at second hand from one of Locke's previous copyists ; probably from Reid or Stewart. Again, we have no room for extracts, but we entreat our readers who may possess the volume, to peruse the three hundred and twenty-sixth and three hundred and twenty-seventh pages of the "Elements of Psychology," and then to read over again the extracts from Stewart and Locke in the preceding part of this article in connexion with the idea of *substance*. When they have satisfied themselves, as we are sure they will do, that the reasoning of the two writers is precisely the same, they will be prepared to appreciate the fairness of the critic's accusation. No one can blame Cousin for borrowing an able argument to prove the immateriality of the soul ; but when, in mercantile phrase, he had "accomplished the loan," for him to turn round and accuse his benefactor of being himself a materialist is rather too bad. The direct occasion of making the charge may as well be mentioned, for it affords a curious illustration of the comparative humility of the two philosophers. With the inherent modesty of his disposition, Locke would not assert, that his argument amounted to a demonstration ; he declared, that it was satisfactory to him, and that the point was "proved to the highest degree of probability," but he admitted, that we could not set limits to Divine power on this subject, or show that it was impossible for Omnipotence to superadd the faculty of thinking to systems of matter, when fitly disposed. Cousin puts forth the same reasoning as his own, declares that it is equivalent to a demonstration, and that Locke's humble and cautious estimate of his means of defence amounts to a virtual desertion to the enemy. If there be any of our readers, who, perplexed by the careless and inconsistent language too often employed by Locke, still think there is some basis for this charge of materialism, let them turn to the celebrated chapter on the existence of a God ; let them consider the nature of the proof employed ; let them examine particularly the long and elaborate argument against the supposition of a material deity ; and then, perhaps, they will believe with us, — not that our French critic knowingly fabricated a base calumny against the author he pretended to review, for we believe him to be an honest man, though a weak and vain

one, — but that he never read this portion of the “*Essay*,” except perhaps a few headings of the sections, or he must have seen, that his accusation was utterly groundless and absurd.

The third charge above mentioned, which concerns the nature of the argument for proving the being of a God, opens to us a wide field of discussion, which we must pass over in a hurried and imperfect manner. The inquiry will be more surely conducted, if, before we attempt to weigh the different proofs against each other, we determine definitely in our own minds, how much we are to expect from any or all of them. We hold, that demonstrative arguments are confined to the sphere of abstract ideas, and are never properly applied to real existences. The geometer and algebraist are busied about pure abstractions, and the results which they obtain must be qualified in a material degree before they are applicable to practice, or can be verified by experiment. The Deity is not a mere idea ; His existence is a fact, the most momentous of all facts. Such, at least, we conceive, is the Christian conception of a God, — a real and personal Being, properly distinguished from His works, though everywhere present in those works. As such, the reality of His being must be made evident to our finite capacities through moral proofs. We do not say, that the argument does not *amount* to a demonstration, for this would imply that the reasoning we are obliged to use is less cogent and conclusive than that of the mathematician, a point which we by no means admit ; but we do say, that it *is* not a demonstration. Moral proof raised to the highest point does not differ in degree, but in kind, from demonstrative evidence. On a thousand independent subjects the convictions of the geometer are quite as firmly fixed, as on those which he has just established by means of diagrams and figures “that never lie.” At any rate, enough is done to secure the full measure of human responsibility on this awful subject, to make man justly accountable for denying his God, when it is shown, that among all the expectations and probabilities, by which the actions of this life, from the most insignificant to the most important, are governed, there is not one more firmly supported, than that which points to the separate existence of an all-wise and all-benevolent Creator and Governor of the universe.

We are perfectly aware, that this view of the matter does

not supply an *argumentum ad hominem* to M. Cousin. He talks with perfect consistency about demonstrating the existence of a God, for he not only reasons from pure abstractions, but he identifies the object of his inquiry with an abstract idea. According to his theory, the three elements of pure Reason, the idea of the Finite, the Infinite, and their relation, do not afford a passage to the Divine existence, "for these ideas are God himself." These three elements, "a triplicity which resolves itself into unity, and an unity which developes itself into triplicity," constitute the Divine Intelligence itself, the *tria juncta in uno*, the mystery of the Godhead. "Up to this height, Gentlemen," he exclaims in the most impressive style of *French* eloquence, "Up to this height, Gentlemen, does our intelligence upon the wings of ideas, — to speak with Plato, — elevate itself. Here is that thrice holy God, whom the family of man recognises and adores, and before whom the octogenary author of the 'Système du Monde' bowed and uncovered his head, whenever he was named. But we are now above the world, above humanity, above human reason. [True.] We are no longer in nature and in humanity; we are only in the world of ideas."\* Those who are satisfied with this conception of the Deity can accept also Cousin's demonstrative proof of His existence. But for ourselves, we want words to express our indignation against this impious Harlequinade of words, — this mode of binding together three dry sticks of abstract ideas, and then baptizing the miserable fagot as God.

In estimating the validity of the objections to the argument *a posteriori*, it is important to remember, that they have neither force nor application, except against the unwise assertion, that this argument is demonstrative in its character. They leave absolutely untouched the overwhelming *probability*, — we use the word in its technical and logical meaning, — the moral certainty, which results from this chain of reasoning, when considered only as a moral proof. Take an instance from one branch of the main argument, the reasoning from final causes. It is idle for the skeptic and the Transcendentalist to assert, that adaptation does not *prove* design, unless he admits in the same breath, that it creates so strong a presumption of design, that a man would be a fit tenant of

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\* *Introduction to the History of Philosophy*, pp. 131, 132, 158.

Bedlam, *caput insanabile tribus Anticyris*, who would not act upon the proposition with quite as firm assurance, as if he were enunciating any theorem in Euclid. Yet Paley's admirable work has been impeached, because he did not waste his own time and his readers' patience in an attempt to substantiate this simple proposition, — because he coolly took it for granted. We do not rest the whole, or even the chief, stress of the argument for the Divine existence upon this single point. We hold, that the argument is naturally cumulative, for the very reason, that it is not a demonstrative, but a moral, proof. We admit all branches of it, therefore, the *a priori* no less than the *a posteriori* element, each holding its proper place and adding its due share to conviction. We only protest, — and here lies the point of the matter for Cousin and his adherents, — against the virtual rejection of the argument from the effect to the cause, because it is said, forsooth, to be the fungous growth of a diseased tree, the off-spring of that mighty bugbear, the Sensual philosophy.

The charge against Locke, — and it is treated as a grave one, — is, that he grounds his reasoning “almost exclusively upon external proofs drawn from the sensible world.” Though we have hitherto reasoned as if the charge was well founded, yet it turns out, as might be expected after the tissue of misrepresentations which we have exposed, that the matter of the indictment is not more than half true. Man's own existence is the only *datum*, the only sensible fact that is appealed to in the argument ; from this point the reasoning is direct by a short series of intuitive propositions up to the being of a God. Even this existence is subsequently explained (see Sec. 18th) to be a spiritual existence, the point of the argument turning upon man not as a material, but a thinking, creature. Locke's selection of an argument does not appear to us a very happy one, and we have already given our reasons for not considering it as demonstrative, though we thereby contradict his favorite doctrine. But it would be quite as well to represent his reasoning correctly, before making it the subject of criticism.

Locke's real offence consists in rejecting the Cartesian method of treating the argument. To rest the whole weight of the proof on the idea of God as it exists in the human mind, is the course which Locke censures as partial and unwise. He admits, that there is some force in this consid-

eration, that it may have some influence on minds of a peculiar cast ; but he blames the proceeding of those, who, “ out of an over-fondness for that darling invention, cashier, or at least endeavour to invalidate all other arguments, and forbid us to hearken to those proofs, as being weak or fallacious, which our own existence and the sensible parts of the universe offer so clearly and so cogently to our thoughts, that I deem it impossible for a considering man to withstand them.” A more wise and catholic doctrine than this it would be difficult to imagine ; it stands opposed to that narrow bigotry, which Cousin has contributed of late to revive among us, which, in the foolish dread of a Sensualist tendency, would reject all appeals to that glorious book of external nature, that lies constantly open before us, written all over, within and without, with the name of the Father of all.

The original argument of Descartes has been reproduced in later times under various forms, the most noted of which are those of Cousin and Benjamin Constant. Admitting, as we do without reserve, that this argument has its weight and should be allowed full companionship with the others, we may still refuse to discard all the rest for its sake, or even to allow it the chief place among them. Considered alone, it lies open to the serious objection, that it affords no direct answer to the reasoning of the skeptic. Establish as strongly as may be the fact, that the human mind is never without the idea of a superior and more perfect directing Intelligence, — prove both from history and philosophy, that man is naturally and of necessity a religious being, — the scoffer, and the doubter will both demand to be shown, that this idea corresponds to a real existence, that this faith rests upon a solid foundation, that man is not that unhappy being compelled to accept what he cannot defend, and to believe where he can produce no evidence. They will say that it is doing little honor to our faith to reduce it to the rank of a necessary prejudice. We mistake the scope and purpose of skepticism, when we assume, that its sole object is to refute certain articles of faith. The intention of the Pyrrhonist is to discredit the whole intellectual faculty, to sap the very foundations of belief, by establishing ceaseless warfare between instinctive faith and calm, investigating reason. No one is more forward than Hume to admit, that we *must* believe in the principle of causality, in our own existence, in the reality

of an external world. But it was the aim of his sophistry to show, that these primitive beliefs were at variance with known facts and sound logic, were contradictory and self-destructive, and that we were compelled to entertain them, even when their veracity had been successfully impeached to ourselves. Behind all these admissions, the presence of which in his writings has perplexed many of his assailants, we perceive the mocking glee of the acute logician, who triumphs by the use of his adversary's own weapon. Hence the contemptuous satisfaction with which he received the attacks of his unskilful opponents, Beattie and others, and sometimes of a more redoubtable champion, Reid himself, who, by their appeals to common sense and universal belief, often played into his hands and strengthened his argument. Before skepticism of this sort, it is evident, that the reasoning of the French philosophers is powerless, for it does not touch the point.

Our examination of the peculiarities of Cousin's speculations has been necessarily brief, but it may convey some idea of the spirit and tendency of his philosophy, and of the points of contrast which it presents with systems previously established. We have criticized his writings with perfect freedom, though with no hostile feeling or preconceived prejudice, but from a sincere desire to do that justice to him, which he has certainly failed to render to one of the greatest names in the list of English philosophers. Nothing has been said of the strong national feeling, which has evidently blunted his perception of the defects of the Cartesian philosophy, caused him to treat with the utmost tenderness even his avowed opponents of Condillac's school, and betrayed him into an illiberal and unjust attack upon the principles of Locke. Had his gross misconceptions and unfounded criticism of these principles been confined to his own country, they might well be passed over here without exposure. But there are those among us, who, incapable of judging or too indolent to examine for themselves, have taken up these charges at second hand and repeated them so often and confidently, that a name once almost venerated wherever the English language was known, has become associated in the minds of many with all that is degrading, skeptical, and unsound in philosophical opinion. It would be asking quite too much from such persons, to entreat them to weigh and



ponder with caution the shallow and fantastic speculations, which it is intended to substitute for the ostracized philosophy ; but in the name of all truth and fairness, let them cease to echo borrowed charges, until they have, — we do not say, examined, — but *read* the writings against which they are directed. We are far, very far, from being indiscriminate admirers of Locke. It would be strange, indeed, if the progress of speculative inquiry since his time had not opened many new fields of research, and corrected many errors, into which he had fallen. But the catholic spirit in which his great work is written, the entire absence of pretension in enunciating his opinions, the wisdom of his practical views, the sagacity and good sense with which the inquiry is conducted, and, — we do not scruple to say it, — the general soundness of his doctrines, are qualities that must insure to him study and respect, as long as the language shall endure. To his example, more than to any other single cause, the healthy and judicious tone of English speculations in philosophy for more than a century is properly to be attributed. He is the proper father of Reid and Stewart with their school, who, we must say, have rendered him but scanty justice, and the proper opposite of Cousin, who has treated him with no justice at all. There are many points in his “*Essay*,” which now require to be limited and explained. There are some doctrines, which we would fain cut away altogether. But there remains after all, as we verily believe, a greater body of truths first clearly set forth by him and still unimpeached, than in any other single work on a corresponding subject, that has appeared since the revival of letters.

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